

Contact: Jill Arnone
Communications, History San José
408 315 5121
jilla@thearnonegroup.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

History San José Presents ***City of Champions: 2001, a San José Soccer Odyssey***

San José, California – September 12, 2011 --- Pro soccer in San José has a rich if unheralded history. Ten years ago, at the dawn of the new millenium, San José was for a shining moment the epicenter of America's edition of the world's favorite sport. San José boasted the most accomplished teams and the most celebrated players in the land. Never before or since has a single American community held at the same time both men's and women's pro trophies or been more deserving of the mantle, "City of Champions."

History San José's latest exhibit, *City of Champions: 2001, a San Jose Soccer Odyssey*, on display at San Jose City Hall from October 19, 2011 through February 29, 2012, commemorates the tenth anniversary of this enchanted moment in our sports history.

"San Jose is Soccer City U.S.A.," says Soccer Silicon Valley Community Foundation (SSVCF) President Don Gagliardi, who also serves on the History San José board of directors. "Soccer is world class but grassroots, just like San Jose. We have one of the greatest traditions of soccer participation in the country, our pro teams have brought home championships, and, pertinently, our community of fans has come together in a really unprecedented way to collect, preserve and display the area's amazing soccer heritage."

The exhibit's primary sponsor is SSVCF, an all-volunteer charity comprised of San Jose Earthquakes fans with a variety of initiatives dedicated to building community through soccer.

"This is exactly the type of cultural exhibit that History San José is proud to present," said Alida Bray, President and CEO of History San José. "It is in keeping with the mission of making the collection available to the people, and demonstrating the cultural lifestyle of the Santa Clara Valley."

Over the past three years, Quakes fans, working through SSVCF, donated thousands of artifacts – many rare and unique – to History San José, volunteered countless hours at the museum collection center cataloguing and photographing them, and raised tens of thousands of dollars to underwrite this exhibit and a future permanent display in the anticipated Earthquakes stadium at the former FMC site by the airport.

"Before we started what we call our Soccer Legacy Project, soccer was almost entirely absent from the museum collection," says Gagliardi. "You wouldn't know that Brandi Chastain grew up in San José. Now, you can see her sports bra – yeah, that bra! – in this exhibit."

Chastain, who serves on SSVCF's advisory board, has loaned for the exhibit her sports bra, first revealed when she removed her jersey after scoring the winning penalty kick in the 1999 Women's World Cup final. Chastain's game-worn jersey from when she starred for the Bay Area CyberRays women's pro team, which won the national WUSA championship in 2001 while playing home games at San Jose's Spartan Stadium, can likewise be viewed in the exhibit.

Spartan Stadium was also the site of the first ever game in Major League Soccer (MLS) history, won by San Jose. The first ball ever kicked in that game will be on display along with the jersey won by Eric Wynalda while scoring the league's first ever goal. Among other unique items, the MLS trophy won by the San Jose Earthquakes in 2001 can be seen along with the jersey worn and medal won by Quakes rookie Landon Donovan, perhaps the greatest male soccer player ever produced in the United States.

"San Jose is the only city with a collaboration between a pro sports team (the Earthquakes), its fans (SSVCF), and a history museum (History San José)," adds Gagliardi. "The *City of Champions* exhibit reflects this unique relationship."

San Jose City Hall is located at 200 East Santa Clara Street, in downtown San Jose, CA. The exhibit will be in the concourse of the City Council Chambers and open to the public during office hours, Monday through Friday, 8 AM to 5 PM.

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About History San José:

History San José is a non-profit organization dedicated to preserving and sharing the continuing history of the Santa Clara Valley. HSJ manages one of the largest and most comprehensive regional history collections in the State of California, from 1784 Spanish governmental records to twenty-first century Silicon Valley technology. History San José aspires to provide innovative national leadership in preserving and sharing regional history by engaging diverse audiences in exploring the varieties of human experience that contributes to the continuing history of San José and the Santa Clara Valley.

History San José 1650 Senter Road San José, CA 95112 408.287.2290

www.historysanjose.org

About Soccer Silicon Valley Community Foundation:

Soccer Silicon Valley Community Foundation (SSVCF) is an all-volunteer 501c(3) non-profit comprised of fans of the San Jose Earthquakes devoted to "building community soccer." SSVCF which has a variety of charitable initiatives, including the Soccer Legacy Project to collect, preserve and display the Bay Area's soccer heritage, is the only fan-based philanthropy in American pro sports. www.ssvcf.org.

